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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Selectmen, Auditors, Liquor Agent,

AND

SUPERINTENDING SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OF THE

TOWN OF HOPKINTON,

FOR THE

Year ending February 28, 1875.

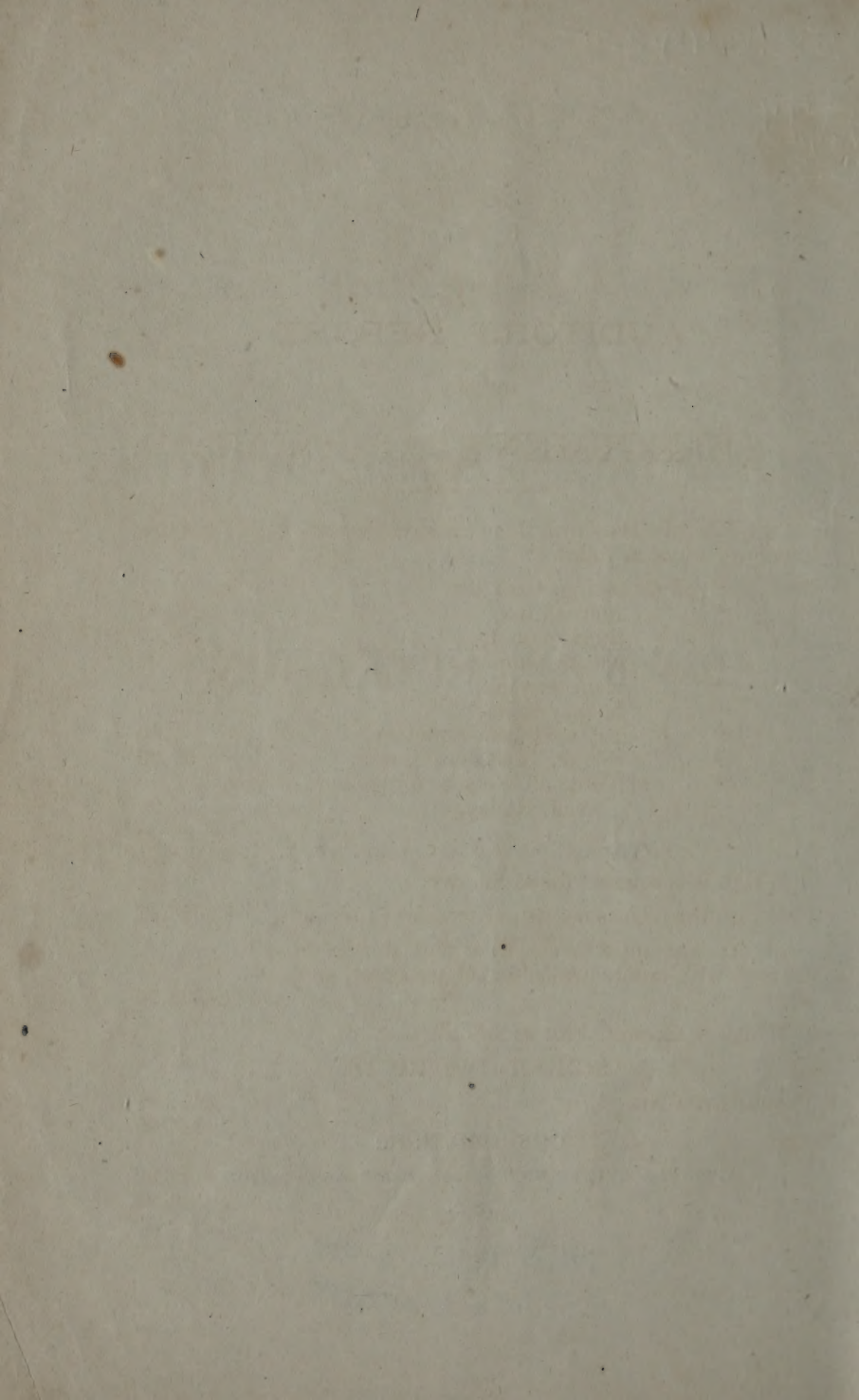
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1875.

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# AUDITORS' REPORT

## OF THE

### SELECTMEN'S ACCOUNT.

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1st. Wherein they find them chargeable with cash received, in sundry ways, as follows :

Cash received for savings bank tax,	\$2,407.52
"    railroad tax,	280.94
"    literary fund,	160.72
"    county paupers,	53.08
"    insurance tax,	5.25
"    bounty claim,	64.00
"    hay sold from cemetery,	2.00
"    sale of Tewksbury goods,	25.30
"    of Town of Webster for support of Mrs. A. J. Kelley,	59.90
	\$3,058.71

Which is accounted for as follows :

Paid into town treasury, as per treasurer's receipts,     \$3,058.71

2d. An account wherein they find the selectmen charged with orders drawn on the treasurer, amounting to     \$19,428.76

Which is accounted for as follows :

#### SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

Paid District No. 1,	\$173.98
2,	117.99
3,	118.00
4,	83.92
5,	83.92



Paid District No. 6,	\$100.96
7,	132.60
8,	103.39
9,	96.09
10,	268.90
11,	156.94
12,	93.66
13,	108.26
14,	88.79
16,	86.36
17,	81.49
18,	69.31
19,	113.12
20,	178.84
21,	50.00
24,	81.48

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\$2,388.00

Cash paid for state bonds, \$2,618.33

#### TOWN DEBTS PAID.

Notes and interest, \$5,566.88

#### STATE AND COUNTY TAXES.

Paid state tax,	\$2,144.00
county tax,	1,894.54

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\$4,038.54

#### CONTOOCOOKVILLE PRECINCT TAX.

Paid Isaac D. Merrill, treasurer, \$22.11

#### SCHOOL-HOUSE TAXES.

Paid John F. Gage,	Dist. No. 14,	\$3.50
John F. Burnham,	" 20,	50.00
Charles N. Tuttle,	" 10,	52.00

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\$105.50

#### SUPPORT OF COUNTY PAUPERS.

Paid Mrs. L. M. Scott, board of Abigail Hardy,	\$4.00
assistance rendered Julia Lynch,	49.08

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\$53.08

## PAUPERS BELONGING TO OTHER TOWNS.

Medical attendance to Mrs. Jackson Kelley,	\$30.90
Paid for coffin for Mrs. Jackson Kelley,	9.00
	<hr/>
	\$39.90

## TOWN PAUPERS.

Assistance rendered Susan Baker,	\$196.92
A. and B. Tewksbury,	251.37
Cora Poland,	11.25
Sally Hastings,	60.76
Almira Keezer,	33.00
Stephen Burbank,	1.00
Benjamin Clark,	1.75
George W. Mills's family,	8.50
H. W. Smith,	11.45
Transients,	53.50
Paid for digging grave for Baruch Chase's daughter,	3.00
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	\$632.55

## REPAIRING HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES.

Paid Newman L. Greene, snowing Blackwater Bridge,	\$5.00
Charles Putnam, repairing highways,	9.45
H. H. Crowell, " Dist. No. 33,	31.50
Frank E. White, " "	16.00
J. S. Clark, " "	4.50
H. H. Crowell, " Dist. No. 4,	38.20
H. H. Crowell, " Dist. No. 42,	14.00
John S. Straw, " "	16.00
James S. Keezer, " "	22.25
E. S. Richardson, " "	5.50
Geo. K. Goodrich, " "	33.25
Hazen Kimball, " "	2.50
Jeremiah Abbott, " "	39.49
Charles A. Morrill, " "	2.50
John Roach, " "	2.00
Moses W. Burbank, " "	.75
J. F. & E. D. Burnham, lumber for Dist. No. 15,	9.00
Daniel B. Austin, " Dist. No. 32,	34.08
Benj. Hoyt, labor on bridge for " "	8.00

Paid F. J. Campbell, labor on bridge for Dist No. 32,		\$27.12
J. R. Elliott,	"	10.50
Anson White,	"	13.12
J. H. Emerson,	"	3.50
S. F. Eastman,	"	27.69
Rufus P. Copps,	"	1.50
James O. Straw,	"	3.50
Sullivan Flanders,	"	5.25
John Holbrook,	"	14.00
Ebenezer Flanders,	"	14.00
Enoch Danforth,	"	2.25
George W. Piper,	for Dist. Nos. 10 and 12,	15.12
F. J. Campbell,	" 10,	17.00
J. R. Elliott,	" 10 and 12,	15.40
Benj. Hoyt,	"	21.62
Moses E. Dodge,	"	16.27
Amos H. Davis,	" 10,	6.50
John S. Straw,	"	13.25
Charles O. Barton,	"	1.75
Rufus P. Copps,	"	8.00
S. F. Eastman,	"	7.00
Ebenezer Flanders,	"	10.00
Greeley D. Tucker, stone for bridge,	"	23.40
		<hr/>
		\$571.71

### BREAKING ROADS.

Paid John G. Colby, District No. 19,		\$3.75
T. Scott French,	" 53,	17.02
John Holbrook,	" 25,	5.20
Thomas C. Piper,	" 26,	9.85
John L. French,	" 48,	6.82
Sidney F. Eastman,	" 32,	7.34
Frederick L. Scott,	" 18,	4.20
Herrick C. Annis,	" 19,	6.00
David Seavey,	" 14,	7.60
Thomas B. Jones, Jr.,	" 30,	4.00
Thomas B. Jones,	" 30,	14.40
Charles A. Morrill,	" 18,	2.00
Abder C. Sargent,	" 3,	20.60
T. O. Harrington,	" 34 and 35,	22.00
		<hr/>
		\$130.78



## MISCELLANEOUS.

Paid John G. Lovejoy, services as constable,	\$6.00
H. F. Edmunds, services as selectman after settlement,	15.00
H. F. Edmunds, wood for town-house,	5.00
J. F. Burnham, freight on derrick,	2.00
J. F. Burnham, services as selectman after settlement,	14.00
E. C. & G. G. Bailey, printing 50 briefs and 650 town reports,	77.00
Charles Hardon, making school report,	3.00
Calvin Tyler, snowing Tyler's bridge,	8.00
Daniel Flanders, storage of two hearses, 1873,	6.00
William Colby, services as constable for 1873,	6.00
Isaac D. Merrill, services as treasurer after settlement,	10.00
George C. Blaisdell, certificates of births and deaths,	5.00
George B. Hardy, notifying town officers,	15.00
T. B. Richardson, services as selectman after settlement,	13.00
T. B. Richardson, horse hire,	2.00
A. D. Holmes, putting up guide-board,	1.50
William Palmer, moving Tewksbury goods,	2.00
Ebenezer Flanders, repairing derrick,	.85
David L. Gage, money advanced for liquors,	200.00
Timothy Colby, lumber furnished for bridges,	13.14
Curtice & Stevens, repairing lamp in Contoocookville bridge,	1.05
E. A. Boutwell & Co., lumber furnished for hearse-house,	62.50
E. A. Boutwell & Co., posts, rails, and boards for cemetery fence,	23.32
E. A. Boutwell, copy of non-resident tax,	3.00
John Y. Mugridge, professional services from February 14, 1870, to January 10, 1874,	140.50
James S. Tuttle, moving seals and measures,	1.00
H. H. Crowell, cash paid for running line between Hopkinton and Warner,	2.50
H. H. Crowell, cash paid for running line between Hopkinton and Webster,	2.50
Isaac Rowell, snowing Rowell's bridge,	5.00

Paid Thomas E. White, snowing Henniker bridge,	\$5.00
Hawthorne & Greene, professional services from August 10, 1872, to April, 1874,	195.00
Asa Fowler, professional services from July 22, 1872, to April 27, 1874,	107.00
E. B. Dunbar, labor on hearse-house and building tie rails,	25.00
Melvin Colby, painting hearse-house,	18.00
H. C. Dustin, damage to sleigh,	2.25
Charles Gould, road surveying,	3.00
George W. Currier, interest on Lerner charity fund,	25.00
H. H. Crowell, cash paid surveyor for running town line between Dunbarton and Hopkinton,	1.50
Charles Gould, one day surveying road,	3.00
Charles A. Morrill, cash paid for running town line between Hopkinton and Henniker,	2.13
Amos Frye, Jr., damage for land taken for highway,	100.00
David L. Gage, notifying jurors,	1.58
David L. Gage, stationery,	3.00
David L. Gage, nails for hearse-house,	3.74
David L. Gage, recording marriages and deaths,	16.50
J. W. Wilson, return of births and deaths,	1.50
Daniel Flanders, storage of hearse for 1874,	3.00
Charles C. Lord, making school report,	3.00
James Colby, taking care of derrick, 1872,	3.00
Eli A. Boutwell, non-resident highway taxes paid in labor,	31.71
Henry H. Crowell, horse hire,	15.00
Isaac Story, citizens' subscription to the town- house,	1,025.00
Horace F. Edmunds, services as building com- mittee on town-house,	55.00
James M. Connor, services as building committee on town-house,	56.00
Isaac Story, services as building committee, and cash paid out,	66.42
Eli A. Boutwell, non-resident highway tax paid in labor,	2.22
Ebenezer Flanders, horse hire,	10.00
Charles A. Morrill, horse hire,	13.00
Henry H. Crowell, postage and stationery,	3.00
	<hr/>
	\$2,445.41



## TOWN OFFICERS.

• Paid David L. Gage, services as clerk,	\$25.00
Charles C. Lord, supt. school committee,	28.75
Clarence A. Harvey,                   “	30.00
Charles Hardon,                       “	39.92
Eli A. Boutwell, services as collector,	100.00
Henry H. Crowell, services as selectman,	130.00
Ebenezer Flanders,                   “	96.00
Charles A. Morrill,                   “	110.00
Grosvenor A. Curtice, service as treasurer,	50.00
Herman W. Greene, services as moderator,	15.00
	<hr/>
	\$624.67

## ABATEMENT OF TAXES.

Paid George B. Hardy, list of 1866,	\$15.55
David Seavey, list of 1867 and 1868,	69.32
William Colby, list of 1872 and 1873,	26.40
Eli A. Boutwell, list of 1874,	80.03
	<hr/>
	\$191.30

Total of selectmen's account, \$16,810.43

The auditors find the account of the selectmen correctly cast and properly vouched.

H. A. FELLOWS,  
THOMAS B. JONES,  
TIMOTHY COLBY,

Hopkinton, Feb. 27, 1875.

*Auditors.*

## REPORT OF LIQUOR AGENT.

*February 23, 1875.*

Received from town treasurer,	\$200.00
sale of liquors,	184.92
	<hr/>
	\$384.92
Which is accounted for as follows:	
Paid for liquors,	\$197.71
casks,	2.50
freight,	5.30
agent's fees,	46.57
Cash in agent's hands,	132.84
	<hr/>
	\$384.92
Value of stock on hand,	\$78.99
DAVID L. GAGE, <i>Agent.</i>	

## REPORT OF BUILDING COMMITTEE.

The committee, appointed by the town to rebuild the town-house, make the following report:

They charge themselves with moneys received by orders from the selectmen on the town treasurer, amounting to	\$3,525.00
Subscription for cupola,	38.00
For lumber sold,	21.45
Repaid on lime,	.40
	<hr/>
	\$3,584.85

Which is accounted for as follows:

Paid for materials and labor for rebuilding town-house, \$3,584.85

Which is respectfully submitted by

HORACE F. EDMUNDS,  
ISAAC STORY,  
JAMES M. CONNOR,  
*Building Committee.*

Hopkinton, Feb. 24, 1875.

We hereby certify that we have examined the foregoing account, and find it properly vouched and correctly cast.

HENRY H. CROWELL,  
EBENEZER FLANDERS,  
*Selectmen of Hopkinton.*

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### FINANCIAL CONDITION OF TOWN.

Town bonds against the town,		\$25,000.00
State bonds,	\$2,500.00	
Taxes uncollected,	1,786.56	
Securities for subscriptions to build town-house,	175.00	
Cash on hand,	3,164.64	
	<hr/>	7,626.20
Amount of indebtedness,		<hr/> \$17,373.80

HENRY H. CROWELL,  
EBENEZER FLANDERS,  
CHARLES A. MORRILL,  
*Selectmen of Hopkinton.*

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### AUDITORS' REPORT OF THE TREASURER'S ACCOUNT.

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G. A. Curtice in account with the town of Hopkinton :

1. The Lerner legacy, where they find him charged with securities, Feb. 28, 1874,	\$500.00	
Interest collected,	30.00	
	<hr/>	\$530.00



## Accounted for as follows:

Securities on hand Feb. 27, 1875,	\$500.00	
Interest carried to cash account,	30.00	
	<hr/>	\$530.00

## 2. Taxes assessed for 1874, and committed to Eli A. Boutwell for collection:

Resident town tax,	\$9,411.10	
Non-resident town tax,	478.45	
School-house tax, District No. 10,	78.06	
“ “ 20,	52.21	
Dog tax,	117.00	
	<hr/>	\$10,136.82
Taxes uncollected for 1872 and 1873,		1,949.07
		<hr/>
		\$12,085.89

## Accounted for as follows:

Cash received from collector, 1874,	\$8,731.18	
Tax remaining uncollected for 1874,	\$1,405.64	
	<hr/>	\$10,136.82
Cash received from collector for 1872 and 1873,	\$1,568.15	
Tax remaining uncollected for 1872 and 1873,	380.92	
	<hr/>	\$1,949.07
		<hr/>
		\$12,085.89

## 3. An account of securities on hand:

Collector's notes,	\$255.22	
Notes due the town,	611.21	
State bonds and accrued interest,	8,930.00	
Interest on notes,	139.60	
Interest on state bonds,	150.00	
Securities for town-house, subscriptions unpaid,	175.00	
	<hr/>	\$10,261.03

## Accounted for as follows:

Cash received on collector's notes,	\$255.22	
notes due town,	611.21	
sale of state bonds,	6,430.00	
interest on notes,	139.60	
bonds,	150.00	
State bonds on hand,	2,500.00	
Town-house securities,	175.00	
	<hr/>	\$10,261.03

## 4. Cash account.

Cash on hand at settlement, 1874,		\$4,147.44
Interest on Larned legacy,	\$30.00	
"      bonds,	150.00	
"      notes,	139.60	
from notes paid,	611.21	
from sale State bonds,	6,430.00	
Collector of taxes, 1872 and 1873,	1,568.15	
"      "      1874,	8,731.18	
from collector's notes,	255.22	
Savings Bank tax,	2,407.52	
Railroad tax,	280.94	
Literary fund,	160.72	
Insurance tax,	5.25	
U. S. bounty,	64.00	
Support of county paupers,	112.98	
Sale of Tewksbury goods,	25.30	
Hay sold,	2.00	
Subscriptions for building town-		
house,	850.00	
Liquor agent, 1873,	10.32	
Refunded by N. Philbrick,	9.00	
Collector, interest on taxes, 1874,	10.00	
	<hr/>	\$21,853.39
		<hr/>
		\$26,000.83

## Accounted for as follows:

Orders drawn by selectmen,	\$21,184.15	
Interest paid on town bonds,	1,652.04	
Cash on hand February 27, 1874,	3,164.64	
	<hr/>	\$26,000.83

The auditors certify that they have carefully examined the foregoing accounts of the treasurer, and find them correctly cast and properly vouched.

H. A. FELLOWS,  
THOS. B. JONES,  
TIMOTHY COLBY,  
*Auditors.*

# REPORT

## OF THE

### SUPERINTENDING SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

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#### GENERAL CONDITION OF THE SCHOOLS.

Compared with years immediately previous, the school year just closing presents no special peculiarities of conduct or success. The present plan of organization and management expresses such a fixed or settled condition as to admit of scarcely any variation in an ordinary course of events. Schools have been held in every district in the town, and, with a single exception, for at least two successive terms, and in a few instances a third session has been added. In almost every case the legal continuation has been uninterrupted. A few cases of sickness, on the part of teachers, have disturbed the uniformity of the general conduct. In one or two instances a term has been brought to a close through some private or general disaffection. As a whole, the profit has been equal to that of ordinary later years.

#### QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS.

We consider that the history of the schools of this town for years past has revealed the presence and activity of a superior class of teachers. Judging from what we know of the conditions of education in our state, we think the present corps not inferior to those supplied by any location of equal educating facilities. The majority of those employed are our own residents, and they have shown the more intelligent results of attendance at the high school and academy. Because our town has long enjoyed an almost uninterrupted opportunity for educating



higher classes, the common schools have been emphatically the gainers. We hope our citizens will never allow their interest in the local high schools to lag. An important incentive to a favorable consideration of the high school is implied in the fact that without it, our general system remaining as now, we shall have to depend largely on common schools for instructors; and, as the stream cannot rise higher than the fountain, the possibility of such a resort is unpleasantly suggestive.

While we do not wish to apologize for our teachers, we must not fail to note the means of greater efficiency. In presenting what we have to offer upon this point, we do not ignore the fact that no instructor can possibly be exempt from error and a liability to mistakes; but it ought to be constantly borne in mind that every person who proposes to teach should cultivate a habit of studious devotion to practical, scientific, and literary subjects and principles. Prospective and active instructors should read more of those treatises which expound the subjects and matters proper to the uses of the school-room. Especially should our own English language be a theme of constant culture. We have, in a number of instances, noted gross inaccuracies of speech in the school-room, on the part of those employed to instruct children and youth. Preparation against errors is of equal importance with experience, and no teacher can thoroughly succeed without it.

#### DISCIPLINE.

The discipline has been favorable. In a large majority of instances teachers have attested their natural aptness to interest, govern, and instruct, without a display of authority. The ability to accomplish this will expel trouble from most any school-room. Without it there is no sure guaranty to success, and districts cannot be too vigilant in securing and retaining such as give evidence of possessing it. A natural friend and companion of children is the only person fit to assume the position of teacher; with such a person, kindness and politeness, joined with an appropriate firmness, will generally accomplish order in its fullest requirements. Qualities opposite to these should never be tolerated for a day.

We would suggest that the people of a district cannot be too careful, lest they encourage any rising excitement resulting from defective order in the school. Do not be in haste to anticipate or affirm the cause of such a fact. It often requires acute search to reveal its true origin. While it is well to remember that teachers are only human, and subject to grave liabilities to error, it is also profitable to consider that children often excel in deception and cunning, while even parents themselves are not altogether above reproach. The rising cloud may have its origin either in or out of the school-room, and, without great patience, forbearance, and charity, the best of intentions may lead to most unfortunate results. The members of the committee congratulate themselves that no case of discipline has been officially brought before them. It is also pleasant to note that, in the great majority of instances, scholars have been so respectful and obedient as to prevent even the suggestion of hostility to and rebellion against the proper authority of the teacher.

#### TEXT BOOKS.

The condition of our text books is, in too many districts, most lamentable. We have by far too many varieties treating of the same subjects. The evil results accruing from the present condition of things are sadly apparent. It induces too many classes, and prevents that uniformity which alone can secure more profitable results. Worse than this, teacher and pupils are often brought into confused relations with each other by means of a difference of terms and phrases where no conflict of principles is involved. We are emphatically in favor of occasional introductions of *improved* books, but are opposed to the exchange of books in use for others that are no better. With the exception of geographies, no frequent changes in text books is ordinarily required. Various political changes, and the development of new countries, necessitate the comparatively frequent introduction of fresh geographical descriptions and maps. The general principles of the other branches usually taught in our common schools are far less variable, and the

claimed improved illustrations embodied in the works of new authors are often based upon the most insignificant distinctions. This subject is more unpleasant to contemplate, from the fact it is exceedingly difficult to find a permanent remedy for the evil. If the office and consequent authority of a school committee were more permanent, continued effort might accomplish something, but as it is there is no certain safeguard unless we may perhaps look for it in the action of the law-makers of the state.

The present committee have been extremely reluctant to introduce new features in this direction, especially as they felt their inability to accomplish a herculean task. However, acting within the limits of the present state law, they have made some slight changes in reading books, introducing the Franklin series in the place of others in use, and, where it seemed to be needed, putting Hagar's Primary Written Arithmetic in the hands of some pupils.

#### ILLUSTRATIVE APPARATUS.

Our schools are almost entirely destitute of this great desideratum. Even the old outline maps, besides being now defective and unreliable, are becoming dilapidated and useless. There is a great demand for anything that may assist in illustrating the topics that are daily discussed in the school-room. There is hardly a district in town but needs each a globe, maps, and a dictionary. A few dollars in each will provide all of these; and the demand is most imperative. Good teachers are now seeking to educate the mind through all the senses, and no longer aim to cram the ear. Object-teaching is becoming more and more common, and unless we supply our best teachers with the necessary aids to attempted success, the scholars of our town will be the sufferers. We contend that each district ought to take this matter up at its next annual meeting. At the same time, special regard should be paid to the quality of the apparatus. Tolerate no imperfect machinery in the school-room. Our present black-boards, in some instances, show how carelessly this matter is treated. A hard, glazed board is enough to discourage the best ambition of a school.



## SCHOOL-HOUSES.

The people of this town have been frequently reminded of the need of better school-houses. It is gratifying to see new constructions and repairs taking place from time to time. It is unnecessary to enlarge upon the fact that many of our school-houses are unfit for the use to which they are devoted. The statement must be apparent to every one. We propose to point out some of the requirements of a good school building. It should be warm: especially the floor should be exempt from crevices letting in drafts of cold air. No one can over-estimate the evil that may arise from compelling children to study with cold extremities and feet. Nor should any child be compelled to occupy a seat which does not permit the feet to rest naturally upon the floor. This evil is too great to allow of one moment's toleration. The fact remains, however, that we have hardly a school-house in town fit for a young child to sit in. What adult person would like to be posted on a high seat, without a privilege to touch the feet to the floor, for the larger part of six hours in a day? Yet children are often asked to do this, and "sit quiet" besides! A person informed in the subject of human physiology can easily anticipate the direst bodily ills,—especially deformities and nervous debility,—liable to arise from this cause. A school-room should also have healthy means of ventilation, and a proper supply of light.

It is our opinion that a school-room should be inviting. Our thanks are due those teachers and pupils who, during the past year, have taken pains to decorate and beautify their school-walls. Pictures, leaves, and flowers are just as appropriate to the school-room as to the home, and their presence, instead of detracting from studious attention, will heighten and improve every intelligent prospect. We hope to see more and not less of manifest inclination to adorn our school apartments.

## TIME OF YEAR FOR MOST PROFITABLE SCHOOLS.

We are convinced that this subject is not sufficiently entertained. To the observing school superintendent it readily be-

comes a matter of serious interest. It cannot fail to be noticed that the same schools evince different degrees of enterprise and proficiency during different seasons of the year. In the same districts where the summer schools in a measure drag heavily and slowly, the winter terms manifest both livelier perceptions and greater progress. Extreme hot weather is, in every sense, prejudicial to mental occupation. We ought to have no schools during the proper heated term. The same length of time employed in early and late summer or autumn terms will be rewarded with much better results. In short, all the primary and intermediate classes might be taught during the spring and fall, and the higher ones in the winter. This condition of things is, however, somewhat problematical with our present district arrangement; yet if we could overcome some of the present not impassable barriers, changes more promotive of benefit would undoubtedly be secured.

#### THE COST OF SCHOOLS.

Public education is a cherished theme with every representative American citizen. The common school is the popular safeguard of our peculiar institutions. With this view of things, the uniform distribution of the means of knowledge is a subject of much moment. The public school is like a highway, which must be kept open as long as any citizen insists upon its necessity to himself. For this reason, we are called upon to study the best means of equalizing the expenses and facilities of common learning.

How far we are at present from a really desirable condition of affairs in this particular may be easily seen. The canvass of the selectmen shows there are 507 children who are legal scholars. This year the town expends \$2400 in the support of schools. A calculation in simple division shows an average of \$4.73 to each individual. It would be a happy circumstance if each scholar in town could secure his share of the public educational facilities for just \$4.73, but such is not the present privilege. There are only a few larger districts, where the expense

to each scholar is anything less than the proper average rate, while the cost in tuition to each child in District No. 19 is \$5.95; in District No. 13, \$7.73; in District No. 4, \$10.49; in District No. 9, \$12.01. Other district might be cited in similar or even worse figures. A further important consideration, especially to inhabitants of many particular districts, is, as a general rule the most costly schools are of the shortest duration. More than this, there are districts in town that might have sent all their children to the high school or academy for six months, and saved money in their treasuries. The present tendency of circumstances, we are sorry to say, fails to promise any improvement upon this *status*, but rather threatens worse.

#### POSSIBLE REMEDY FOR EXISTING EVILS.

There are not lacking those of our citizens who plainly affirm the described difficulty to arise from the present classification of districts. When the existing number of districts was established, the condition of our population was more uniform; school privileges were also more equal. Now, can we do any better than in some way lessen the number of separate districts? We can unite certain of the feebler ones, or abolish the whole together. The second possible resort leads us to a mention of

#### THE NEW OPTIONAL SCHOOL LAW.

We present this subject, not because we either do or do not think the law immediately practical in our town, but because it is emphatically proper to be understood and considered. In chapter 8, Pamphlet Laws, passed June, 1870, is found the following act:

“SECTION 1. Any town may at any time abolish the school districts therein, and shall thereupon forthwith take possession of all the school-houses, land, apparatus, and other property owned and used for school purposes, which such districts might lawfully sell or convey. The property so taken shall be appraised under direction of the town, and at the next annual assessment thereafter, a tax shall be levied upon the whole town equal to the amount of the whole appraisal, and then shall be



remitted to the tax-payers of each district the said appraised value of the property then taken; or the difference in the value of the property of its several districts may be adjusted in any other manner agreed upon by the parties in interest.

“SEC. 2. When any town which has been divided into school districts shall have abolished them, the said town shall then be considered as one district, and shall have all the powers and liabilities of the same.

“SEC. 3. Such towns shall, at their annual town meeting in March, elect a board of education, consisting of not less than three persons, who shall have and exercise all the powers and duties of superintending and prudential committees of towns.

“SEC. 4. Should any town neglect to choose such ‘board of education,’ the selectmen shall, on or before the twentieth day of April ensuing, appoint them.

“SEC. 5. The corporate powers and liabilities of any school district shall continue and remain for the purpose of receiving and disposing of the money paid for its property by the town, paying its debts, concluding any suit at law, or in equity, in which such district may be a party, collecting any debts due such district, and disposing of the proceeds thereof, and holding and enjoying the income of any money or property held in trust by virtue of any gift, devise, or bequest, for the benefit of each district, for the same purpose, and in the same manner as before, according to the terms thereof.

“SEC. 6. This act shall take effect and be in force only in such towns as, by a vote at a legal meeting, shall adopt its provisions.

“SEC. 7. All acts and parts of acts inconsistent with this act are hereby repealed.”

Under the provisions of this act, a town may have as many or as few schools as it pleases, the same being located where they will accommodate the largest number of scholars. It may establish a graded system, which also implies a free high school. It may enjoy a more equal distribution of the public school money, and have a uniform length of schools.

## SCHOOL REGISTERS.

We advise all prudential committees to observe care that all school registers are properly completed before they are accepted. By the laws of the state, no teacher is entitled to pay until he has returned his register, with all questions answered in full. Teachers may also be reminded that when scholars not resident in the district attend school, their names should be in a separate list. Such an arrangement prevents confusion and error, on the part of the superintending committee, in calculating the aggregate of individuals actually attending school. The superintending committee, also, are bound by law to answer any questions, regarding the local conditions of schools, proposed to them by the state superintendent of public instruction; and, without full and correct registration on the part of the several teachers in town, the task of the committee is exceedingly difficult. We would therefore advise that prudential committees withhold the teachers' pay till they have proved themselves legally entitled to it by conforming to the law respecting school registers.

## MORAL SUPPORT OF SCHOOLS.

The success of any enterprise requires something more than a mere outward performance of its practical duties. It insists upon the presence of that zeal which comes from a sincere devotion to the beneficial uses implied. It exacts that ennobled purpose which seeks the purest means and hopes for the highest results. It demands that patience in the prosecution of a good work, which is exercised only in the charity that suffereth long, and is kind. Our common schools are a public benefit. In their consistent support all individuals concerned must lay aside every private conceit and passion, remembering there is no higher mission in life than to sacrifice merely selfish predilections upon the altar of universal good. Public instruction in this country is now in a merely formative state. What it is to be, no one can tell with certainty. But even as we all in some way express a hope for good results of our actions, which shall extend beyond time itself, let us be reasonably patient with the

present developing condition, and refrain from inflicting a moral wound, especially upon the impressible natures of the growing community, which shall afterwards offend and pain us with its unsightly scar.

CHAS. C. LORD,  
CLARENCE A. HARVEY,  
CHARLES HARDON,  
*Supt. School Committee.*

Hopkinton, Feb. 27, 1875.

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## REPORTS OF DISTRICTS.

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### DISTRICT No. 1.

*Summer Term.* Miss Amelia W. Gordon, teacher. Miss Gordon again sustained her reputation as a teacher. The school was composed of a large number of young scholars, making it one that required a teacher of good qualities, which the district was fortunate in securing. HARVEY.

*Winter Term.* Mr. Clarence A. Harvey, teacher. This school suffered an interruption on account of the illness of the teacher. At the end of nine weeks Mr. Harvey was taken sick, and remained so for some time. School began again on the first of February, continued one week, and closed. At this time there were a number of scholars absent, some on account of work, and others through the then prevailing sickness. The examination was gratifying in more than one respect. It showed there had been an endeavor to do thoroughly what was done, the pupils being made to give a practical account of themselves. Again, the scholars were brought before the committee as if they were expected to state rational principles, and not to simply recite a definite number of prescribed rules. With less hindrances, this term had been perhaps superior in its results.

C. C. L.

## DISTRICT No. 2.

*Summer Term.* Miss E. Etta Moulton, teacher. This school is not a very easy one to teach, and it was Miss Moulton's first. We made but one visit,—the notice of the examination failing to reach us. The school seemed then to be doing well. From what was said about the school, we should judge that greater energy and fearlessness were needed in its management. Considering that successful teaching is really a difficult art, it is not strange that beginners should not always succeed to the satisfaction of all concerned. We think the teacher was well qualified, so far as education was concerned, and presume that with experience she might succeed well.

*Winter Term.* Miss Nellie M. Larkin, teacher. This was her first school. She was good in teaching, and also in government over those whom she was physically able to control. More reserve, and less familiarity with those who were stronger than herself, or who were nearly of her own age, would have assisted her toward the government of this latter class. As it was, there were some unpleasant scenes in the school-room, and unbecoming conduct in and about it. There were some scholars here that needed to be governed by a *master*. Considering Miss Larkin's physical strength, we think that, with the exception of the one or two respects mentioned above, she did, in the school, remarkably well.

C. H.

## DISTRICT No. 3.

*Summer Term.* Miss Abbie R. Flanders, teacher. This was her first school. The memorizing was well done. There was too little work on the black-board, though the condition of the boards was not such as to encourage it. The school was characterized by quiet and good order. We would recommend that Miss Flanders should endeavor next time to take hold with more energy and vivacity, if possible.

*Winter Term.* Miss Linda M. Bohonan, teacher. This is a good teacher enough, and it is a shame that there should be any trouble in a school she keeps; but in this school one boy was



asked to leave, and two left of their own motion. There was good teaching, in that work was required to be done principally by the scholars. There was a good deal of black-board work done, notwithstanding the miserable condition of the boards. Penmanship was well attended to, and very good knowledge shown of the subjects studied. C. H.

#### DISTRICT No. 4.

*Summer Term.* Miss Jessie A. Ketchum, teacher. This school was small, and we have not a bit of fault to find with its management. It was her first school, too. We were pleased to see that the scholars were required to read in *natural* tones, and that this was particularly insisted on in the younger classes. The pupils were taught to learn without being told everything. The school was characterized by thoroughness in all the studies.

C. H.

*Winter Term.* Miss Helen H. Colby, teacher. Miss Colby had previously been a teacher in this district, and enjoyed the advantage of acquaintance with its pupils. The most marked feature of her success was the readiness with which her school passed their verbal examination. We frequently notice that children in our schools fail to easily and promptly declare just what they can prove by actual demonstration. This school illustrates a gratifying exception. The scholars seemed unusually ready to respond to questions relating to the subjects over which they had passed. We were also pleased to notice the efforts made to decorate the school-room; a considerable number of pleasant pictures were suspended on the walls. C. C. L.

#### DISTRICT No. 5.

*Summer and Winter Terms.* Mary C. Foss, teacher. Miss Foss gained the support of the district and the good will of her scholars, and pleasing results were produced. At our several visits we were quite satisfied with the appearance of things. The district would do well to continue her services. HARVEY.

#### DISTRICT No. 6.

*Summer Term.* Miss Mary L. Flanders, teacher. The days

of this term were spent in quiet, honest, and progressive study. The manner of instruction and government gave convincing proof of the interest and capability of the teacher. HARVEY.

*Winter Term.* Miss Mary C. Heath, teacher. The closing exercises of the term showed the effects of well directed efforts, all the classes acquitting themselves with much credit. We believe a general advancement was made. HARVEY.

#### DISTRICT No. 7.

*Summer Term.* Miss Sarah A. Phelps, teacher. The school appeared well, and seemed to be in a good and prosperous condition. The exercises of the last day were creditable to scholars and to teacher. We wish the district might see fit to now consign their school-house to its inevitable fate, and have a new one. HARVEY.

*Winter Term.* Miss Sarah A. Phelps, teacher. We were called to witness the closing examination of this school a few days sooner than we had calculated. On entering the school-room, we were impressed that all was not right there. We afterwards learned that the term had closed a little prematurely, on account of a private disaffection. This fact may have prevented the pupils from appearing to the best advantage, though there were not wanting evidences of advancement and improvement. From what we have heard, we infer that the district in general, if not altogether, were satisfied with Miss Phelps's labors in the school-room. C. C. L.

#### DISTRICT No. 8.

*Summer Term.* Miss Clara A. Smith, teacher. Miss Smith went to work with some good ideas—a determination to succeed, and make the term beneficial to herself and scholars; and we can say that Miss Smith's first term gave proof of future laurels to be won in the school-room. HARVEY.

*Winter Term.* Miss Emma L. Burnham, teacher. This was Miss Burnham's first term, and we have nothing but praise to offer. By practice, Miss Burnham may rank among our best teachers. Particular attention was paid to the classes in reading—a feature not always noticeable in our schools. HARVEY.

## DISTRICT No. 9.

*Summer Term.* Miss Salina S. Huntoon, teacher. Miss H. had five bright little girls to work for, and her position was by no means a disagreeable one, the improvement from day to day being clearly visible. Considering the number and age of the scholars, the school is not excelled in its amount of intellect.

HARVEY.

*Winter Term.* Miss Salina S. Huntoon, teacher. This school is eminently primary in its character. The children are all young, and classed in the rudiments. In its conduct, Miss Huntoon succeeded easily and well. Everything accomplished on her part was done without apparent effort, and the results were equal to reasonable expectations. We consider the ability to manage, without display of authority or effort, one of the highest attainments of a true teacher.

C. C. L.

## DISTRICT No. 10.

*Summer Term.* Miss Anna W. Heath, teacher. The efforts of the teacher and her success were very satisfactory. We think she did remarkably well, considering the irregularity of attendance. Order was good. No correction was necessary, we believe, during either of our visits. We would strongly recommend the parents in this district, if they care anything for the morals of their children, to send them to school just as near to the hours of nine and one as possible. The scholars who were the most regular in attendance made the best examination.

*Winter Term.* Mr. Thomas B. Richardson, teacher. There was great irregularity of attendance, as usual. We were present during an examination of the arithmetic classes, in which most who were present showed an unusual thorough knowledge of the principles of the book, from its beginning to its end. The school was not characterized by many of the formalities of school discipline, but the pupils seemed to be well under the control of the teacher. We think that, considering the disadvantages under which he labored, much good work was done,

and very desirable results were accomplished. There was a shameful abuse of outbuildings, but whose fault it was, besides the scholars', we do not know. C. H.

#### DISTRICT No. 11.

*Summer Term.* Miss Linda M. Bohonan, teacher. Improvement was shown in this school under an efficient teacher, but still it seemed backward, especially in reading. The school seemed to be characterized by good order and behavior, and much care and interest were shown in adorning the room for examination. We thought the scholars would not have been hurt by a little harder study, or by being pushed along more into what had not already been studied.

*Winter Term.* Mr. Carlos F. Hardy, teacher. There was a good deal of irregularity of attendance, though we were told that this was for the most part unavoidable. The teacher took the school with much reluctance and misgiving, but met with a good degree of success, though hard work was necessary to accomplish it. The school seems to be generally improving, and we hope it may not soon have any inexperienced teachers to practice upon it. Reading, particularly, as mentioned in the report for the summer term, needs attention, there being too much of a desire to get into books of a too advanced grade. The classes in geography and history showed well, and the school as a whole was very satisfactory. C. H.

#### DISTRICT No. 12.

*Summer Term.* Miss Nellie A. Sargent, teacher. The order and behavior were excellent. The memorizing was good; less credit was shown at the black-board. Visitors ought to come into the school oftener, so that scholars may become accustomed to think and work before them. There was good material in this school. C. H.

*Winter Term.* Mr. Geo. H. Dodge, teacher. The conduct of this school was maintained with an apparent ease and regularity pleasant to witness and profitable to exist. This fact is, in part, probably due to Mr. Dodge's previous experience as a teacher.



The general progress was commendable, while the proficiency in grammar and analysis and written arithmetic was more marked. Mr. Dodge spoke to us of his difficulties resulting from a confusion of grammatical text-books in this school.

A private term of six weeks was taught in the autumn by Miss Annie L. Howe, of Henniker. We visited the school once, and noticed pleasing features of success. The course of the people of this district, in supporting a fall term, meets our hearty approval.

C. C. L.

### DISTRICT No. 13.

*Summer Term.* Miss Mattie Bruce, teacher. This was Miss Bruce's first school. Rife with the results of severe training in the Boston schools, she attempted to enforce a similar disciplinary arrangement here. A rigid topical system seemed to be her ideal of a course of study. To say that she satisfied many people in the district would be false. To affirm that the committee discovered evidences of a wilful disregard of her duties and responsibilities would be equally untruthful. She worked hard, but toiled on an unappreciated and, perhaps, unwisely chosen plan, and her school closed prematurely for want of scholars. In the opinion of the committee she possesses elements which, with more experience, may make her a successful teacher. Her register is one of the neatest we have seen.

C. C. L.

*Winter Term.* Miss Nellie A. Sargent, teacher. The conduct of this school showed hard work and good results. The examination revealed a great familiarity with the topics discussed during the term, being perhaps surpassed by none this season. One particularly good feature of this school was the pains taken by the teacher to inculcate correct principles in pronunciation. This branch is most inexcusably neglected in by far too many instances. This school is one of those which have suffered from the too frequent introduction of new text-books. In her register, the teacher remarks,—

"I entered upon the duties of the past term of school, feeling that the responsibilities resting upon me were very great. Still, the prospect did not deter me in my earnest endeavors to labor faithfully for the best interests of the pupils entrusted to my care and instruction. I endeavored to impress upon their minds the importance of being thorough in all they undertook. Yet I failed to bring the school to that high standard I hoped for at the commencement. The tardy and absent marks have been too many, in a few instances. More visits from the parents would have been welcomed. The term I hope has been profitable, and my labor not all in vain."

The subject of tardy marks is, no doubt, entitled to some leniency of consideration, on account of the extreme inclemency of the winter. The want of active sympathy from parents is hardly peculiar to any district in town. Would that it might cease to be felt.

C. C. L.

#### DISTRICT No. 14.

*Summer Term.* Miss Ella F. Underhill, teacher. Miss Underhill had good material to work, advantage of which was taken. Much interest was manifested by the teacher for the welfare of the school, and her endeavors for progression were diligent. System and order were certainly a motto; the examination thorough and complete.

HARVEY.

*Winter Term.* Miss Ella F. Underhill, teacher. In our judgment Miss Underhill possesses some of the best qualifications of a teacher. She governed her school easily, and aimed to impress her pupils with a right value of study. The practice of fixing principles, as they came in course one by one, was most commendable. The school itself is, no doubt, entitled to a full share of credit for the good results obtained. The pupils seem to be the most kindly and intelligently disposed. In her report Miss Underhill says,—“The people in this district manifest a great interest in the welfare and progress of their children, who are well-behaved, respectful, and studious.” A pleasant feature in the conduct of this school was the pains taken to

beautify the school-room, pictures and autumn leaves being disposed in excellent taste upon the walls. No doubt this fact deserves much profitable consideration.

C. C. L.

#### DISTRICT No. 16.

*Summer and Winter Terms.* Miss Clara A. Flanders, teacher. Very satisfactory improvement was made under a pains-taking and earnest teacher. There was a good attendance by visitors in the summer term, but, on account of stormy weather, there were none present except the committee at the close of the winter term. It was pleasant to find the school-room beautifully ornamented with flowers at the close of the summer term.

C. H.

#### DISTRICT No. 17.

*Summer and Winter Terms.* Katie E. Currier, teacher. Miss Currier having established the reputation of being one of our best teachers, it is needless for us to particularize. The district is sadly in need of a comfortable school-house, located on a more desirable site.

HARVEY.

#### DISTRICT No. 18.

*Summer Term.* Miss Lucinda F. Carter, teacher. It appeared that Miss Carter was not at a loss how to spend the time profitably with her scholars. Principles and rules were well explained, and seemingly understood. The improvement made was entirely satisfactory.

HARVEY.

*Winter Term.* Miss Lucinda F. Carter, teacher. Miss Carter has been repeatedly employed by this district to teach its children—a fact revealing a degree of confidence higher than is always awarded to an instructor in our common schools. Judging from our personal observation, Miss Carter secured the love of all her pupils, and they obeyed her without any hesitation. We consider the scholars of this district to be possessed of most unexceptionably good dispositions. Where there is so much apparent harmony between teacher and scholars, there cannot fail to be profitable results.

A third term is being taught in this district by Miss Alma



N. Holmes. We regret we are obliged to send to press before witnessing the final examination. The amiable character of the children in this district has already been referred to, and Miss Holmes's previous labors, here and elsewhere, are not without their deserved repute. No doubt the profit of this term is practically established.

C. C. L.

#### DISTRICT No. 19.

*Summer Term.* Miss A. Priscilla Elliott, teacher. Miss Elliott, having had charge of the school for some time previous to this term, went directly to work in the right place. The school under Miss Elliott's care has done well, and ranks higher at the present time than we ever before knew it.

HARVEY.

*Winter Term.* Mrs. A. Priscilla Dow, teacher. The repeated demand for Mrs. Dow's services in this district shows the esteem in which she is held by the people. In most instances, so permanent a relation is infallible evidence of a prosperous school. There were very gratifying signs of improvement in several of the branches—we might mention reading and arithmetic particularly; there was also an ambitious class in analysis and parsing. Mrs. Dow speaks thus in her report:

"I feel well satisfied with my labors in this district. I have always been made to feel perfectly at home in this school-room, where I have labored forty-six weeks. The kindness and obedience of the pupils, and the marked respect which I have ever received from the patrons of the district, have led me to think my services have been well appreciated. This is one of the best schools with which I have ever been connected, and it contains some very excellent and intelligent pupils."

C. C. L.

#### DISTRICT No. 20.

*Summer and Winter Terms.* Miss H. Pauline Heath, teacher. In the summer the scholars seemed to be improving and studious, and good feeling prevailed. At the examination there was a pleasant variety of exercises, and we were satisfied that the school had been a profitable one. The attendance was very good. The winter school was conducted apparently with a



good degree of satisfaction to the district. The committee however feel confident that a stricter discipline was demanded, especially among the boys. The showing made by this part of the school was, with some pleasant exceptions, not satisfactory. The girls for the most part appeared well, and we think the teacher exerted herself to have all do so. We do not know that it was her fault that they did not. The best teacher in the world cannot produce very desirable results without the coöperation of wise and judicious parents. C. H.

#### DISTRICT No. 21.

*Summer and Fall (one term).* Mrs. A. Priscilla Dow, teacher. This school was excellently managed and governed. There was no trifling, but good and thorough work was done. This teacher had had this school for several terms before, and it had been always satisfactory; and though we failed to get notice of the examination, and therefore were not present, we felt that we did not need to be there to be assured that it passed off well.

C. H.

#### DISTRICT No. 24.

*Summer and Winter Terms.* Miss Lizzie A. Palmer, teacher. The labors of Miss Palmer have been well received and highly appreciated by all. Scholars under her care receive thorough instruction and good discipline. To continue her services would be beneficial to the district.

HARVEY.

